

What Is The Relationship Between "Hedonic Calculus" Analysis" and "Natural and Necessary Desire" Analysis?

Post by "Cassius" of January 23, 2026 at 11:16 AM

As to other ancient sources beyond Diogenes Laertius and Cicero that might be of help, I see that Diogenes of Oinoanda repeats the main citations but offers no additional explanation:

Fragment 32

Each (virtue?) therefore means of (?) ... just as if a mother for whatever reasons sees that the possessing nature has been summoned there, it then being necessary to allow the court to asked what each (virtue?) is doing and for whom [We must show] both which of the desires are natural and which are not; and in general all things that [are included] in the [former category are easily attained] ..

Fr. 39 lower margin (Epic. Sent. 29 = Sent. Vat. 20)

[Of the desires, some are natural and necessary; others] natural, but [not necessary]; and others neither natural nor [necessary, but the products of idle fancy.]

And perhaps Fr. 132 but there's not much here:

[However, such beings are not accustomed to obtain the good will of neighbours, nor] again [to favour whatever man they wish. If] therefore [they observe] what is natural and ...

MORE HELPFULLY HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT PHILODEMUS DOES MENTION IT, IF THIS STATEMENT FROM CLAUDE IS CORRECT. So the next place to look is going to be in Philodemus

Philodemus of Gadara (c. 110-40/35 BCE)

- His treatise *On Choices and Avoidances* (PHerc. 1251) explicitly discusses the classification of desires into natural and necessary, natural and unnecessary, and unnatural and unnecessary. **Column VI** contains a statement of the classification:

- Quote

"(of natural pleasures) some are necessary, others not necessary; and of the former ones themselves some are necessary for life, others for the health of the body, others for living happily."

Another clue is that Claude says that Philodemus applies this classification in his work *On Anger* , distinguishing between natural and empty anger based on Epicurus' distinction of natural and empty desires. However without a precise quote and reference I wouldn't take that to the bank.